

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 29, 36, 43-46, and 48 are amended herein. Claims 49-51 are added. No claims are cancelled. All pending claims are produced below. In addition, the status of each is also indicated below and appropriately noted as “Original”, “Currently Amended”, “Cancelled”, “New”, “Withdrawn”, “Previously Presented”, and “Not Entered” as requested by the Office.

1. 1-28. (Cancelled).

29. (Currently amended) A method for use in a detector device for controlling access to information on a network including a plurality of interconnected devices, the detector device coupled to the network between a first device and a second device, the method comprising:

monitoring, independent of the first device and the second device, a plurality of request signals between the first device and the second device in the network, at least one request signal including a user identification parameter;

determining whether a user identified by the user identification parameter in the at least one request signal is permitted access to data being requested;

comparing a predetermined parameter associated with the user with a predetermined parameter associated with the data to determine permission to access the data; and

generating a response to the request signal to alter communications between the first device and the second device in response to the comparison providing a first result and to not altering alter communications between the first device and the second device in response to the comparison providing a second result, the detector device allowing the plurality of request signals to pass uninterrupted between the first device and the second device regardless of the first result or the

second result in response to the detector device transmitting a non-impedance signal to the first device or the second device, the non-impedance signal transmitted in response to an operational failure of the detector device, the operational failure comprising a non-functioning operation.

30. (Previously Amended) The method of controlling access of claim 29, wherein the generated response comprises allowing access to the data when the predetermined parameter associated with the user is greater than or equal to the predetermined parameter associated with the data.
31. (Previously Amended) The method of controlling access of claim 29, wherein the generated response comprises allowing access to the data when the predetermined parameter associated with the user is less than or equal to the predetermined parameter associated with the data.
32. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the generated response comprises re-directing the request signal to a third device in response to the predetermined parameter associated with the user being less than the predetermined parameter associated with the data, the third device allowing for a re-setting of the predetermined parameter associated with the user to a new parameter comprising a value greater than or equal to the predetermined parameter associated with the data.
33. ((Previously presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the predetermined parameter associated with the user is one from a group consisting of a positive monetary value, a positive time value, a bandwidth value, a quality of service value, and a content rating.

34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 33, further comprising allowing access to one from a group comprised of voice data, video data, and a real-time application in response to at least one of the bandwidth value or the quality of service value being greater than or equal to a threshold parameter.
35. (Previously presented) The method of claim 29, further comprising providing access to a second data that does not require a parameter value in response to either the predetermined parameter associated with the user being less than or equal to the predetermined parameter associated with the data or the user not having permission to access the data.
36. (Currently amended) A network-based billing method for use in a detector device for providing access to resources on a network, the detector device coupled to the network such that the detector device does not introduce a point of failure, the method comprising: monitoring, independent from the resources, a data signal from a device on the network, the data signal including a request for a resource; identifying a value for accessing the resource; associating a user identification with the data signal; determining whether a user identified by the user identification is permitted access to the resource; identifying a credit balance for the user identification; comparing the credit balance with the value to determine whether access to the resource is permissible; in response to the comparison, determining a response to the request for the resource; and

in response to an operational failure within the detector device, allowing transmitting from the detector device a non-impedance signal to at least one of the resources to allow data signals to pass uninterrupted between the resources on the network, the operational failure comprising a non-functioning operation.

37. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising allowing access to the resource in response to the credit balance being less than or equal to a cost of preventing access to the resource.
38. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising allowing access to the resource in response to the credit balance being greater than or equal to a cost of preventing access to the resource.
39. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising re-directing the data signal to a second resource in response to the credit balance being less than the value, the second resource configured to allow for increasing the credit balance.
40. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising providing access to a second resource having no cost in response to the credit balance being less than the value.
41. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, wherein the value comprises one from a group consisting of a monetary value, a quality of service value, a bandwidth value, a time value, and a content rating value.
42. (Previously presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising passing the data signal to a second device having the resource.

43. (Currently amended) A detector device to control access to information on a network including a plurality of interconnected devices, the device comprising:
- a processing unit within the detector device coupled to the network between a first device and a second device, the detector device independent of the first device and the second device, the processing unit configured to execute instructions, ~~the instructions including that when executed cause the processor to:~~
- ~~monitoring~~ monitor a plurality of request signals between the first device and the second device in the network, at least one request signal including a user identification parameter;
- ~~determining~~ determine whether a user identified by the user identification parameter in a request signal of the plurality of request signals and associated with the first device is permitted access to data associated with the second device;
- ~~comparing~~ compare a predetermined parameter associated with the user with a predetermined parameter associated with the data to determine permission to access the data;
- ~~providing~~ transmit a response to the request signal of the plurality of request signals in response to the comparison; and
- ~~allowing~~ transmit a non-impedance signal to the first device or the second device,
the non-impedance signal to allow the plurality of request signals to pass uninterrupted between the first device and the second device in response to an operational failure within the detector device, the operational failure comprising a non-functioning operation.

44. (Currently amended) The device of claim 43, wherein the processing unit is further configured to execute instructions ~~comprising providing the response by allowing to~~ cause the processor to permit access to the data when the predetermined parameter associated with the user is greater than or equal to the predetermined parameter associated with the data.
45. (Currently amended) The device of claim 43, wherein the processing unit is further configured to execute instructions ~~comprising providing the response by allowing to~~ cause the processor to permit access to the data when the predetermined parameter associated with the user is less than or equal to the predetermined parameter associated with the data.
46. (Currently amended) The device of claim 43, wherein the processing unit is further configured to execute instructions ~~comprising providing the response by re-directing to~~ cause the processor to re-direct the request signal of the plurality of request signals to a third device in response to the predetermined parameter associated with the user being less than the predetermined parameter associated with the data, the third device allowing for a re-setting of the predetermined parameter associated with the user to a new parameter comprising a value greater than or equal to the predetermined parameter associated with the data.
47. (Previously presented) The device of claim 43, wherein the predetermined parameter associated with the user is one from a group comprising a positive monetary value, a positive time value, a bandwidth value, a quality of service value, and a content rating.

48. (Currently amended) The device of claim 47, further comprising ~~allowing instructions to~~
cause the processor to permit access to one from a group comprised of voice data, video
data, and a real-time application in response to at least one of the bandwidth value or the
quality of service value being greater than or equal to a threshold parameter.
49. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein the non-impedance signal comprises at least one
of a reset signal, a re-format signal, a re-direct signal, or a combination thereof.
50. (New) The method of claim 36, wherein the non-impedance comprises at least one of a
reset signal, a re-format signal, a re-direct signal, or a combination thereof.
51. (New) The detector device of claim 43, wherein the non-impedance signal comprises at
least one of a reset signal, a re-format signal, a re-direct signal, or a combination thereof.